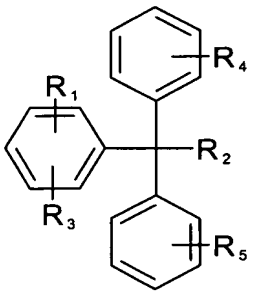
Amendments to the Claims:

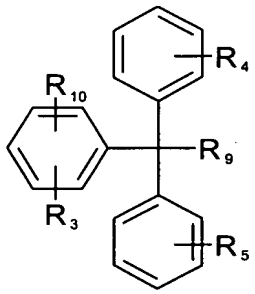
Listing of the Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A process for preparing a compound of formula I



I

wherein R_1 is a reactive substituent or an attachment to a solid phase;
R_2 is a reactive substituent; and
R_3, R_4 and R_5 are each independently hydrogen or one or more substituents attached to each benzene ring and selected from hydroxy, amino, C_{1-10}-alkyl, C_{1-10}-alkoxy, C_{1-10}-alkylamino, di-C_{1-10}-alkylamino, carbamoyl, C_{1-10}-alkylcarbamoyl, di-C_{1-10}-alkylcarbamoyl, halo-C_{1-10}-alkyl, halogeno and nitro;
in free or salt form; comprising
(a) reacting a compound of formula VI with an electrophile:

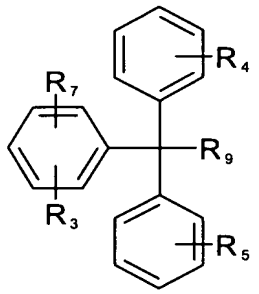


VI

wherein R_3, R_4 and R_5 are as defined above;
R_9 is –OH, –OM or -OMX, where M is metal and X is a nucleophilic substituent;
R_{10} is –M or -MX, where M is metal and X is a nucleophilic substituent;
in free or salt form;
and hydrolyzing the resulting compound to form a compound of formula I wherein R_2 is hydroxy;
(b) optionally converting a compound of formula I wherein R_2 is hydroxy to a compound of formula I wherein R_2 is other than hydroxy;

(c) optionally converting R_1 in a compound of formula I to an alternative R_1 group;
(d) optionally deprotecting a compound of formula I in protected form; and
(e) where required, converting a compound of formula I obtained in free form into the desired salt form, or vice versa.

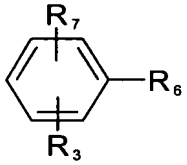
Claim 2 (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein compound of formula VI is prepared by reacting a compound of formula V with a metal or organometallic compound:



V

wherein R_3, R_4, R_5 and R_9 are as defined above; and
R_7 is a nucleophilic substituent.

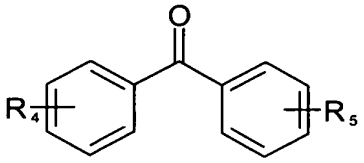
Claim 3 (original): A process according to claim 2, wherein the compound of formula V is prepared by:
(i) reacting a compound of formula II with a metal or organometallic compound



II

wherein R_6 and R_7 are each a nucleophilic substituent and R_3 is as defined above and is protected if necessary by a removable protecting group; and

(ii) reacting the compound obtained in (i) with a compound of formula III

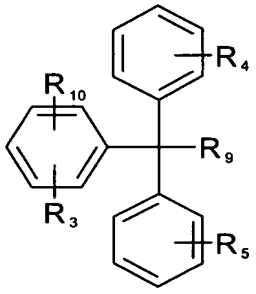


III

wherein R_4 and R_5 are as defined above and are protected if necessary by a removable protecting group.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A process for the preparation of a solid phase support system, comprising preparing a compound of formula I by a process as defined in ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, and coupling the compound with a suitably derivatised or functionalised solid phase material.

Claim 5 (original): A compound of formula VI in free or salt form



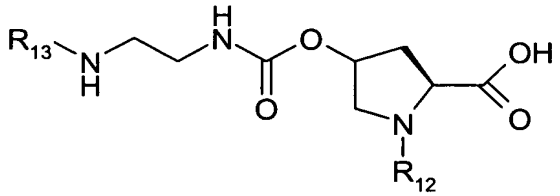
VI

wherein R_3, R_4 and R_5 are each independently hydrogen or one or more substituents attached to each benzene ring, and are selected from hydroxy, amino, C_{1-10}-alkyl, C_{1-10}-alkoxy, C_{1-10}-alkylamino, di-C_{1-10}-alkylamino, carbamoyl, C_{1-10}-alkylcarbamoyl, di-C_{1-10}-alkylcarbamoyl, halo-C_{1-10}-alkyl, halogeno or nitro, optionally protected by a removable protecting group;

R_9 is –OH, –OM or -OMX, where M is metal and X is a nucleophilic subtituent; and

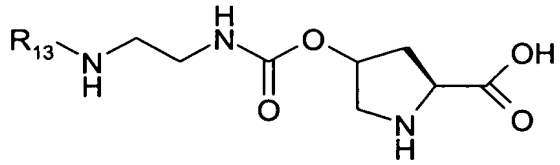
R_{10} is –M or -MX, where M is metal and X is a nucleophilic substituent.

Claim 6 (original): A process for preparing a compound of formula VIII



VIII

wherein R_{12} and R_{13} are each a removable protecting group and R_{12} and R_{13} are different; comprising reacting a compound of formula IX

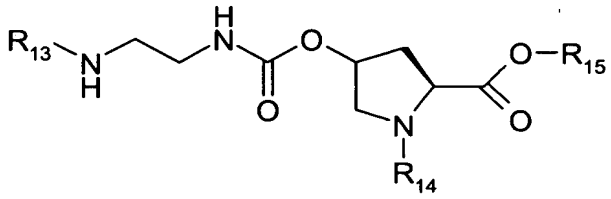


IX

with a suitable R_{12} donor compound.

Claim 7 (original): A process according to claim 6, wherein the compound of formula IX is prepared by

(i) hydrolysing a compound of formula X



X

wherein R_{13} is as defined in claim 6,

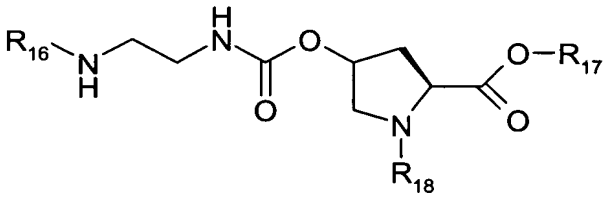
R_{14} is a removable protecting group and R_{14} is different to R_{12} and R_{13}, and

R_{15} is a blocking group removable by hydrolysis or hydrogenolysis,

to obtain the corresponding carboxylic acid, and

(ii) removing the protecting group R_{14} in the resulting carboxylic acid.

Claim 8 (original): A compound of formula XIV



XIV

wherein R_{16} is a removable protecting group other than fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl, and is different to R_{18};

R_{17} is hydrogen or a blocking group removable by hydrolysis or hydrogenolysis; and

R_{18} is hydrogen or a removable protecting group other than fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl.

Claim 9 (original): A compound according to claim 8, wherein R_{16} is tert-butoxycarbonyl.

Claim 10 (original): A process for producing a compound of formula VIII as defined in claim 6, wherein R_{12} is fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl and R_{13} is a removable protecting group other than fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl, comprising reacting a compound of formula IX with a fluorenylmethoxycarbonyl donor compound.